6/3/72

White Supremacist Described as 'Oddball'

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Charles Kress, a self-proclaimed white supremacist from Kensington, was described as an "oddball" yesterday during a Human Relations Commission hearing.

Testifying at the all-day hearing in City Hall Annex were representatives of area schools, community groups and members of the Jewish Defense League. Kress, on the advice of his attorney, failed to appear despite a subpena.

A five-member commission panel heard the case under the public accommodations section of the city's Fair Practices Code. A decision is expected in about 10 days.

Panel's Authority

The panel has the authority to order Kress to cease his activities. It can also fine him up to $300.

Clarence Farmer, commission chairman and a member of the panel, later said the commission may also issue recommendations to the community and to Bell Telephone.

"I'm sure Bell Telephone has much more responsibility than they were willing to admit," Farmer said.

Charges Against Kress

Kress was charged with using a taped phone recording to send racist and anti-Semitic messages. Kress says he has applied for membership in a group which calls itself the National Socialist White People's Party.

He also was charged with spreading racial fliers near schools, holding meetings with children in his home, and sparking racial tensions in the neighborhood.

Harry W. Crane, Bell district manager, testified Kress, of Cumberland st. near Sepviva, had the announcement service installed at his address in February and that it continued until early May.

The listing, he said, was under "the White Power Message."

Crane said the phone company cannot censor messages used on that service unless the phone is being used for bookmaking or if obscene language is used.

'Mausoleum to Hitler'

Lt. George Fencl, head of the Civil Disobedience Squad, said Kress' house "looks like a mausoleum to Hitler."

Albert Gana, head of Kensington Concerned Citizens, said of Kress, "This type of person we don't want in our neighborhood."

"He's harmless now but he might gather a following sooner or later. To us he's an oddball."